

Health and Wellness Advisory Committee
March 23, 2010
Meeting Summary

Attendees: Lenora Sherard, Luam Abraha; Pat Streeter; Odile Saddi; Sara McKechnie; Charles Smith; Shawn Brennan; Susan Emery; Monique Sanfuentes, Pazit Aviv; Joanne Balkovich; Julian Mansfield; Michael Patterson; Phil Smakula; Mary Sweeney; Michael Patterson

Guests: Michelle Blanc and Kathy Pavan

CE's Recommended County Budget

Implications for Recreation Department

- 38 positions eliminated
- Disbanding of Senior Programs Team
- Mini trips eliminated
- Eliminated senior outdoor adventures
- Cut \$100,000 to Gaithersburg Upcounty Senior Center to serve County residents
- Cut \$50,000 from Senior Olympics
- Decrease hours at community centers and facilities
- Restructuring into 2 regional areas (instead of 4)

Implications for DHHS (few of the many)

A. HHS/Again and Disability Services

- **Contracts reductions:** -7percent for a total of \$604,295 for the entire A&D service area.
- **Home Care:** -\$350,000. The maximum number of service hours per week/per person will be reduced from the current 20 to 14. Estimates are that 120 persons will be affected by this reduction. However, this service reduction continues to place this program well above the weekly average number of service hours in the State of Maryland, which currently is 6 to 8 hours.
- **Senior Nutrition:** -\$25,000 for congregate meals. This represents 0.01percent of the Senior Nutrition program of more than \$2 million, which is funded largely with state and federal funds. At present these funds are expected to remain stable and would be used to minimize the effect of the reduction in County funds. There is also a proposed increase of \$36,000 for home delivered meals to persons with chronic and terminal illnesses; this service will be competitively bid.
- **Program Transportation:** -\$165,000 for
 - Bus routes to senior centers and community centers with senior programs at 11 locations in the County. The Departments of Recreation and Transportation are coordinating specific route reductions to match service hours reduction at the Recreation Department facilities and facility closings due to furlough days.
 - Decrease in grocery shopping routes from the current 16 senior apartment buildings to 11. The shopping trips proposed for reduction were based on utilization/ridership.
- **Respite Care for seniors/persons with disabilities:**

- Elimination of funds (\$159,000) for a Respite Care Home operated by a contract agency due to under-utilization.
- A seven percent (-\$49,660) reduction in the respite care contract. The contract agency is a large provider that operates many County-supported services for adults with Developmental Disabilities, including respite care.
- **Elimination of two vacant full-time positions:** one Office Services Coordinator and one Administrative Aide, (\$138,300).

B. HHS/ Public Health

- **Dental Services:** -\$ 100,000 will be reduced, affecting an estimated 420 seniors

Activities of H&W Advisory Group Members

- PSA development: Fire and Rescue working to create messages in English, Spanish and Chinese
- Town of Friendship Heights: Defibrillators; health clinic, Mobile Med.
- Holy Cross: Expanding Senior Fit with Kaiser grant, expanding chronic disease self management program (contract with County in process)
- Suburban Hospital: Vascular screening program to continue, as will mall walking program; new diabetes clinic; heart clinic and Mobile Med; 3-hour sessions for uninsured with financial counselors
- Mind Ramp, new member Michael Patterson's company, provides brain health education

Falls Prevention Campaign

- Michelle Blanc discussed Holy Cross Hospital Senior Source's *Matter of Balance* (group support, addresses fear of falling), "Better Balance" and Fall Prevention Programs
- Kathy Pavin indicated that her agency has provided in-home safety assessments to 25 clients since December.
- Suburban has a community balance program called Free From Falls:

A Suburban Hospital Physical Therapist initiates the program with an information lecture on balance, fall prevention, and home safety. Following up on the lecture, a Suburban Hospital Physical Therapist will perform balance screens to screen for fall risk. Lastly, a home exercise class is held where a Suburban Hospital Physical Therapist will educate and train participants on balance and walking exercises that can be done safely in the home to maintain and improve functional balance, walking, and home safety. The overall goal of this program is to educate participants on balance and fall prevention and provide balance and walking exercises to prevent falls and increase mobility.

- Committee reviewed falls prevention flyer, discussed creating community calendar on falls prevention
- Resource: Falls Free Coalition/NCOA

Shawn announced that she had copies of Living and Thriving in Montgomery County available.